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ABSTRACT

This document considers the discretionary time use of young adolescents. Five domains of out-of-school time use are described: (1) activities alone or with friends; (2) activities with parents; (3) in-home or out-of-home chores, jobs and responsibilities; (4) organized activities including participation in recreational and cultural programs supervised by adults; and (5) television viewing and use of other media. Patterns of time use across all of these domains are examined. Time use research is reviewed that documents the increasing importance of peer relations and the increasing divergence in the activity sets of boys and girls. It is noted that early adolescents spend little time with their parents and families; eating and television viewing tend to be the most frequent family activities. The examination of chores, jobs, responsibilities, and earned income reveals the changing views of the capabilities of boys and girls; reinforcement of role stereotypes; and the desire among young people to earn money. The research reviewed suggests that television viewing peaks in early adolescence and begins to decline through the middle school years. A tremendous diversity within the domain of organized activities is noted. A section on the linkages between time use and the provision of public and non-profit sector services notes that young adolescents do not spend much time in activities sponsored by these sectors. The document concludes by noting several research priorities for the future. (NB)

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YOUNG ADOLESCENTS AND DISCRETIONARY TIME USE: THE NATURE OF LIFE OUTSIDE SCHOOL

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Young Adolescents and Discretionary Time Use: The Nature of Life Outside School

by
Elliott A. Medrich

Highlights

Time use is one way of viewing important commonalties and differences in the experience of growing up.

Studies of time use typically focus on one of two issues: **how much time** adolescents commit to particular activities; or **what** adolescents do, often without regard to the amount of time spent on each activity. Both styles of research enhance our understanding of the relationship between what adolescents do with their discretionary time and the circumstances--family background, gender, neighborhood environment--which serve as a backdrop to time use decisionmaking.

Five domains of out-of-school time use are described:

1. Activities alone or with friends
2. Activities with parents
3. In-home or out-of-home chores, jobs and responsibilities
4. Organized activities including participation in recreational and cultural programs supervised by adults.
5. Television viewing and use of other media

Patterns of time use across each of the domains are summarized as follows.

Time Alone and with Friends

Young adolescence marks the emergence of peers as crucial actors in time use decisionmaking. In contrast to younger children, time use research with adolescents documents the increasing import of peer relations , and in parallel fashion, increasing divergence in the activity sets of boys and girls. Among boys, there is still an interest in "active" forms of leisure (like sports), while among girls an increasing amount of time is spent socializing, talking and engaging in more passive pursuits.

Activities with Parents and Family

Early adolescents spend little time with their parents and families. Eating and television viewing tend to be the most frequent activities, although girls seem to spend somewhat more time interacting with family members than boys. This seems to reflect changes in parent-child relationships--parents do not determine how young adolescents spend their time as they do with younger children.

Chores, Jobs, Responsibilities and Earned Income

This domain reveals several important characteristics of young adolescence--changing views of the capabilities of boys and girls; reinforcement of role stereotypes; and the desire among young people to earn money and, thereby, gain increased control of their time use options. Boys and girls are typically assigned different kinds of chores at home--boys do things like yardwork, while girls are more likely to shop and babysit. These activities also come to characterize the kinds of jobs held among young adolescents employed for the first time (estimates indicate that as many as 20% of fourteen and fifteen year olds work regularly for money outside the home). Young adolescents are more interested in jobs for the sake of income rather than for the "skill building" or "character building" aspects of early work experience.

Television and Other Media

Television viewing peaks in early adolescence and begins to decline through the middle school years. Interestingly, it is sometimes the only activity young adolescents do with their parents or siblings. Other media are beginning to play a significant role in their lives. Many young adolescents spend as much as four to six hours a day listening to music (usually radio), and it begins to emerge as a significant backdrop to other activities, to a degree defining a cornerstone of adolescent peer culture.

Organized Activities

There is tremendous diversity within the domain of organized activities, with regard to the substance, structure, and management styles of the available services. Programs are provided by both public and non-profit sectors, and most young adolescents participate in at least one group, lesson, class, or club during the course of the school year (studies report that between sixty and eighty percent of young adolescents become involved). Levels of participation in particular activities are different for boys and girls, and for children from different income groups. Factors contributing to participation include: involvement of friends, interest in the activity, and whether or not the program or activity offers some measure of autonomy.

Community facilities, as distinct from organized activities, represent a somewhat different type of time use. Physical access is important to decisions young adolescents make about using facilities like libraries, recreation centers and parks. Since they are still minimally mobile, they need services close to home. Providers must be sensitive to the growing independence of the age group and to differences in needs across and within communities, across gender and across age groups.

Linkages between Time Use and the Provision of Public and Non-Profit Sector Services.

Five propositions are offered:

1. Young adolescents do not spend large amounts of time engaged in activities sponsored by public or non-profit sector agencies, but the things they do are valued.

2. The public and non-profit sector tend to concentrate their efforts on providing for those inclined to participate. The needs or interests of non-users are rarely considered.

3. Service providers are not always anxious or willing to plan programs around the expressed preferences or interests of young adolescents.

4. Young adolescents of different backgrounds share some interests in common, but they also differ in many ways. If public and non-profit sector service providers wish to increase participation in their programs, they must design services targeted at specific populations and improve their marketing skills.

5. There must be a careful balance between providing structured programs and providing safe, neighborhood based facilities were young adolescents can be together on their own terms.

It is noted that the public sector is having an increasingly difficult time addressing the discretionary time use needs of young adolescents as "soft services" fall victim to municipal fiscal austerity: services traditionally provided at the neighborhood level are closing; providers are introducing or increasing user fees; and services are reducing specialized professional staff. This reorganization of the public sector affects who are involved in out-of-school activities and what they are involved in. For the non-profit sector these developments represent both a challenge and a considerable opportunity.

The paper concludes by noting several research priorities.

1. We need to know more about time use among populations studied infrequently (e.g. poor children, children of color, children with handicaps, children living in rural areas).

2. We need to focus more attention on linkages between time use and policy.

3. We need better profiles of participation levels among young adolescents in non-profit sector services.

4. We need to improve the flow of information between time use researchers and service providers, as a way of providing better ways to think about the service needs of young adolescents.

In Paul Goodman's remarkable retelling of the Horatio Alger story, an advocate of experiential learning intones:

> What we want for you, boy, is a life worth living, and that's Culture, that's Education...What we want to give you, boy, is the Habit of Freedom,

The streetwise youth remains skeptical, however:

> First you say, no school! Grand! Then you say there'll be a leader draggin' me around. Not so grand. They you say we don't get life but a selection of life. So you have a school after all. I seen 'em walkin' along the street two by two on the way to the Aquarium... Include me out! Freedom is freedom--you don't have to teach me no freedom! (Goodman, 1942, 122).

Young Horatio has grasped the most basic dilemma of out-of-school life--its simple pleasures are too important to be left in the hands of children--they need to be "given" the proper "selection of life." Toward this end, the nature of children's use of time outside school has generated considerable interest and inevitable controversy.

The sources of tension are fairly obvious. While many aspects of a child's day fall squarely under the control of adults, out-of-school time is less clearly adult dominated. What children do and what adults "would like" them to do are often dissimilar (not that children or adults agree among themselves). While not entirely irreconcilable, adult and child perspectives on "appropriate" uses of time outside school often cause disagreements, anxiety, and frustration.

Characterizing the out of school day as "free time" is both a misunderstanding of childrearing conditions and an underestimation of the differing circumstances that affect children's use of time. The substance of out-of-school life is the product of many opportunities and constraints linked to family, peer groups, neighborhood and community environments. Since these environments differ significantly, so does the use of time. In fact, important differences underlie whatever superficial commonalties of time use are in

evidence. Unfortunately, as shall be noted, many descriptions of time use do not probe beyond the most general level, failing to show how family life, social background and community environment create divergent uses of time even among children whose activities patterns, at first, appear quite similar.

This paper takes a somewhat non-judgmental view of what is good and what is bad in terms of time use. There are often mitigating factors that necessitate suspending judgment. In describing time-use, our interest is in trying to understand the complexity of day-to-day life for young adolescents, and how time use choices are made.

Time and Time Use

The environment that shapes how the young use time serves as a window through which to view the experience of growing up. Time is the currency of the realm.

Time, like money, is a scarce resource that can be spent in different ways. Time, unlike money, is allotted equally: everyone shares the same amount--a minute is a minute--and no one can add to it or regain it once it is spent. " We can not build up a stock of time as we can...a stock of capital" (Linder, 1970). Time use, this argument goes, reflects priorities and predilections, opportunities and constraints.

The existence of a temporal dimension to all human experience, despite persistent interest in the subject, has not led to the development of a distinct, rigorous social science of time. On the one hand, time centered studies, in theory, offer "alternative quantitative criteria that would extend the narrow definition of benefit and cost to include the social or human dimension" (Gutenschwager, 1973). On the other hand, time studies contain an inherent bias of their own, which might be called " chronorationalism" --the assumption that the allocation of time is a rational process (Rubin, 1978). This is often expressed in quasi-economic terms: time is a "fixed sum resource," allocated among a range of competing possibilities.

Such models are hardly sufficient for explaining actual behavior. A complex mix of individual, familial and social-structural factors shape and constrain the use of time, so the extent to which what one does represents a conscious choice from among a perceived set of alternatives is often unclear. To eliminate, or at least minimize this problem, time studies

often focus on leisure activities, the parts of the day when people are thought to be exercising the greatest level of control over what it is they do.

Distinct types of time use research have developed along disciplinary lines or research interests that have little in common. In some studies the issue is **how much**--people are differentiated in terms of the amount of time they commit to particular activities (the variable is described in terms of minutes or hours spent). In other studies the issue is **what**--people are differentiated by the nature of their activities (the variable is the activity itself, often studied without regard to the amount of time spent on it).

The Western world has developed a rough ideology of time. This ideology, with both religious and metaphysical roots, emphasizes the need to be industrious, purposeful and productive. Time, at least for adults, is something of a tyrant, a constant reminder of the transitory nature of life.

And indeed, most adults live in some sort of time-bound condition. The responsibilities of daily life demand regular, relatively discrete patterns of work, sleep and nonwork activities. Responsibilities at home and away from home force most adults to treat time as a scarce resource. The child's world rests in stark contrast. The young are neither awestruck by time's finite nature, nor overwhelmed by its scarcity. The tempo of childrens' lives is different, so it is not unreasonable that their sense of time differs as well.

Not surprisingly, one reason children are infrequently the subjects of time research is that such studies are predicated on an adult perspective of time. If time does not "mean" the same thing to young people, calculating how much time they spend doing different things (which would suggest an illusion of orderly behavior) may be a difficult undertaking and not be an especially useful way to judge the **import** of particular patterns. Traditional time research methodologies record the amount of time spent doing different things and take this as a measure of its importance. In a study of drug users for example, Herbert Blumer showed that many adolescents carry a normal load of activities yet perceive all but a fraction of their time use to be unimportant (Blumer, 1967). Hence Blumer constructs two hypothetical, yet equally plausible summaries of the same youth's afternoon and evening:

School: 6 Hours
Socializing in park after school: 1.5 Hours
Eating: 0.5 Hours
Relaxing, watching television, talking on the telephone: 5.0 Hours

Or:
John said that smoking dope with his friends was the only thing he did all day that mattered. It would have been so whether it had taken place at the park, at a friends house, or while watching television at home after dinner.

The difference is not simply a function of reporting style (quantitative vs. non-quantitative). It reflects a problem common to time studies, calling attention to the difficulty of interpreting what these data mean. The amount of time spent on a given activity may not measure its salience, or import to the individual.

Time use studies involve any of several field research strategies. **Enumerations** are designed simply to identify what activities the respondents have done during a given period of time. Usually this is accomplished with a predefined list. The intent is to distinguish "who does what." **Time diaries**, the most common time use research format, probe for more depth. The diaries record respondent activity self reports for a specified period of time (a day, a weekend, a week). Respondents note what they are doing, and where they are doing it, and with whom, at particular time intervals (e.g. every fifteen minutes). The time research tradition has been built on the diary model. Sometimes followup interviews are conducted to flesh out the diary after it is completed. This as a way of improving the precision of each data entry. The third field strategy uses an **electronic pager**, a technical improvement on the diary, somewhat less dependent on the respondent remembering to record his or her activities. These studies, which are increasingly common, "page" a respondent periodically--either at certain time intervals or randomly--over a period of hours or days, and the respondent then fills in a self-report describing what they are doing, where they are, and who they are with, at that moment. All three formats tend to depend on the interest, ability and cooperation of the respondent. As a result, data quality may vary considerably from respondent to respondent and study to study. Successful strategies often combine more than one mode of data collection to enable corroboration of entries, and improve the quality of responses. These three formats typify the methods used in the studies referenced in this paper.

Organization of This Paper

The first section of this paper generally defines the nature of the time use domains, "placing" each in the context of early adolescence. This is followed by an overview of patterns of time use across each domain. The final sections link time use among young adolescents to issues of public and non-profit service provision, concluding with some elements of a future research agenda building on the time use literature.

I. The Domains of Out of School Life

Five "generic" categories generally characterize the types of out of school time (Szalai, 1968; Robinson, 1977; Robinson and Converse, 1972):

1. Activities alone or with friends
2. Activities with parents
3. In-home and out-of-home chores, jobs and responsibilities
4. Organized activities including participation in recreational and cultural programs supervised by adults (other than their parents)
5. Television viewing and use of other media

These activity categories are not mutually exclusive. Nor is the effect of time use in one domain on time use in another necessarily straightforward. As noted below, spending a large amount of time on some activities may diminish the amount of time spent on other activities, or it may not.

In all, we are concerned with approximately a seven hour period each school day--from roughly three o'clock in the afternoon until roughly 10 or 11 o'clock at night--and weekends. These blocks of time have always held some conflicting qualities for young people. They are also a subject of stress for parents, and differences of opinion within the adult community at large. How much freedom should children have? How much supervision? How much responsibility? While the after school hours are the busiest for organized community youth programs, most young people--over 75% in our Oakland survey--usually go right home after school is over. They go to remarkably different kinds of families and neighborhoods, and use their time in very different ways.

A fundamental distinction divides the domains. Three--television and other media, chores and jobs, and organized activities--represent specific kinds of activities. The other two--activities alone or with friends, and activities with parents--encompass a much broader range of experiences. It should be understood that these domains, no matter how many hours they occupy each day, describe "public lives" only. For many reasons it is very difficult to probe private behavior, such as sexuality and drug use, in a systematic way.[1] Rather, this is a selected set of activities and behaviors that illustrate and perhaps define very different daily life experiences. But the result is only a partial portrait.

Two significant shortcomings characterize the adolescent time use literature. It is important that they be noted.

1. Samples are often weak. Few studies of young adolescent time use describe sample characteristics except in very general terms. Samples are rarely drawn in accord with any standard--most seem to be samples of convenience, and not representative of any population. As a result, these data must be approached with caution, suggesting a trend, not evidence of a definitive pattern. One must be careful not to overinterpret the findings.

There are important exceptions, and these are noted. Some large scale surveys overviewing time use patterns are derived from quality random samples. But these studies lack depth--time use is typically only one item of their agenda. Nevertheless, they do establish some boundaries, and they enable us to describe some of the ways in which time use patterns change as young adolescents emerge from childhood.

2. Findings are not consistent. The tables herein illustrate a common problem. Different studies show different time use patterns, even at the most general levels. There are several possible explanations. First, the questions asked may not be identical--or they may be interpreted differently by those sampled. Second, the way data is aggregated may be different from study to study (i.e. coding procedures). Third, the complicated problem of "multiple behaviors" may not be well analyzed (i.e. subjects doing more than one activity at the same time, like watching TV, talking to a friend, and doing homework).

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[1]There are a number of studies focused particularly on deviant activities. Rutter and Giller (1984), for instance, report that 57% of high school seniors have tried an illicit drug; 36% have tried a drug other than marijuana; 92% use alcohol, and over half of the male respondents report some form of "delinquent action." While salient to understanding time use patterns, documenting these kinds of behaviors require carefully drawn, sensitive protocols and special data collection techniques in their own right. As a result, time use researchers usually do not try to collect these kinds of data.

Finally, the sample populations may be different, and not representative of general populations in ways associated with different time use patterns. Some inconsistencies may result from differences in the time of year or time of the week during when data is collected. It is generally recognized, for instance, that studies in the summer show different time use patterns than studies at other times of year. Similarly, time use during weekend days typically follows a pattern of its own. Unfortunately, such distinctions are often not defined or described or taken into account in reports of time use, thereby confounding the data base. But without regard to why inconsistencies occur, they burden the literature and raise questions, inevitably, as to the reliability of the data. Solving consistency problems requires both more careful attention to methodology, better research designs, and better sampling.

These factors help frame some future research issues, which are discussed in the concluding section of this paper.

II. Time Use Across the Domains

Time Alone and With Friends

Young adolescence marks the emergence of the peer group as a locus of activity and support. In contrast to younger children, time use research with adolescents documents the increasing import of peer relations, and in parallel fashion, increasing divergence in the activity sets of boys and girls.

The National Education Longitudinal Study (U.S. Center for Education Statistics, 1990) surveyed 25,000 eighth graders, a nationally representative sample.[2] The study found that young adolescents from families of high income and high levels of parent education are more likely to be home alone after school. But eighth graders from families in the lowest socio-economic status quartile are most likely to report that they are home alone for more than three hours (17.2%); while those of the highest socio-economic status quartile are least likely to be at home alone for three hours or more (9.3%).

Crockett and her colleagues (1984) studied 355 sixth through eighth graders. While their sample was mostly white and middle class, they identified a typical, emerging pattern of peer relations. Over 75% spent much of their time outside school in groups. Over 50% said that they are part of a "clique" that spends a lot of time together. Girls reported spending time with their friends every day, most often at school. Over 70% of the sample spent 1 to 3 hours per day with their friends outside school. Boys were somewhat more likely to spend time together with their friends doing an activity other than socializing. Coates (1987) sampled 390 lower SES blacks and found that males reported larger groups of friends than girls.

Reed Larson and his colleagues (Larson and Richards, 1989) studied 401 fifth through ninth graders in two white, working and middle class suburban Chicago communities. Larson describes significant changes in time use patterns from pre-adolescence to adolescence. Among younger children time use consisted of play, television and home and

[2] The NELS sample included 3.6% Asian and Pacific Islanders, 10.4% Hispanics, 13.2% Blacks, 71.4% Whites, and 1.4% American Indian and Alaskan native.

family centered activities. Time devoted to play and games declined by half between fifth and ninth grade. Among adolescents, socializing, listening to music, activities alone and with friends were most important. Larson also found increasing divergence in time use by gender.

An intensive study by Csikszentmihalyi and Larson (1984) explored a week in the lives of 75 high school students. (see Table 3 and Table 4). They found that the adolescents in their sample spent roughly one-sixth of their waking hours socializing with friends, and one-third of that time "conversing" . Television viewing was the second most frequent activity (7.2% of their time), along with other activities alone, like reading and listening to music (7.3%). These adolescents spent 27% of their time alone, 52% with classmates or friends. A lesser proportion of time was spent with the family (under 20%) and only a portion of that time with parents. About 13% of time is spent studying.

Raffaelli (1989) studied 401 5th through 9th graders in a Chicago suburb. Friendship takes on adult-like meaning for young adolescents. 'Socializing" is an important, new kind of time use. For girls, "just talking" is becoming a significant activity in its own right. By ninth grade, girls are spending twice the time socializing in this manner as boys (16 hours per week as against 8 hours per week). Further, girls are beginning to use the phone as a way of keeping in touch with their friends. They spend twice as much time on the telephone as boys by the eighth grade (Crockett, 1984). Larson and Kleiber (1991) corroborate the increasing level of socializing, noting that it is the "most frequent" activity of high school students (16% of waking hours), especially important among girls. They note, however, that while this is a large block of time, its meaning depends on "who they talk with, what they talk about, and how they talk about it." (15) The variety of social settings is also changing. Based on a small sample of eighth graders in the Los Angeles area, Anthony (1985) notes increasing interest in going to the mall as a locus of activity in its own right. The mall serves as an oasis, "relief" from home and school, a place where it is easy to be with others. In a study of 7th through 12th graders in one Wisconsin county, Boelter and colleagues (1990) found that nearly one-third spend ten hours a week or more in unsupervised activities described as "hanging out" or "cruising."

Based on a sample of 87 (44 inner city Black children and 43 suburban white children) in the Chicago area, Littell (1989) finds that some activity patterns are linked to place of residence. She reports that adolescents living in the city spend more time with friends and siblings engaged in informal and organized activities than do their suburban counterparts.

This may be a function of access to facilities and programs. If so, it suggests an important difference in the structure of certain opportunities. Doing things that cost money was second only to informal sports as the activity type of choice. Kirshnit, et. al.(1989), using the same sample data as Raffaelli (1989), extends this argument, adding that young adolescent boys are more likely than girls to engage in informal sports activities. Further, while the amount of time both boys and girls devote to sports and other physical activities declines during the junior high school years, participation in both formal and informal sports, among both boys and girls, tends to be more common among those of higher SES backgrounds and among those doing better in school (Larson and Kleiber, 1991).

The texture of time alone also changes in early adolescence. The role of television diminishes while interest in music and radio increases dramatically (discussed in a later section). Boys spend more time at home alone--they are more likely to eat alone, and more likely to do chores alone (Duckett, et. al., 1989). Homework typifies differences between the sexes at this age. Eighth and ninth graders report about six hours of homework a week in one study (Leone, 1989). Boys are more likely than girls to do homework alone, girls are more likely to do homework with their friends. Generally better students did homework alone or with a family member or parent than did students doing less well.

Young adolescence represents a time of transition in terms of time use and the conditions underlying activity choices. Boys and girls are becoming less alike; their interests and tastes are diverging; and the relationship to the peer group as an activity locus is dissimilar--for boys there is still an interest in "active" forms of leisure, for girls an increasing amount of time is spent socializing, talking and engaging in more passive pursuits.

Activities with Parents and Family

Early adolescents are spending little time with their parents and families. Richardson (1984) notes that among a sample of 355 Pennsylvania seventh and eighth graders, eating was the main thing adolescents and their families did together. About 80% report eating at least one daily meal with another family member (not necessarily a parent). Television viewing with family members was the next most common daily activity (40%). About one-third of the sample reported at least weekly participation in family outings, projects, chores, or religious services.

Csikszentmihalyi and Larson found parents and children spending little time together. Timmer and her colleagues (1985) saw some difference between the sexes--girls talking and interacting with family members more than boys.

In a study of 483 fifth through ninth graders in two working-class and two middle to upper-middle class suburbs of Chicago, Larson and Richards (1991) report a significant decline with age in the amount of time young adolescents spend with their families. Fifth graders spent nearly half (47.8%) of their time outside of school with their families, ninth graders only 26.5% (girls) and 28.1% (boys). Time with families was replaced not by time with peers, as might be expected, but by time alone. While this study found a decline in time spent with the *entire family together*, time with *parents* did not change significantly across age groups.

There are few studies of young adolescents and family time use. To some extent this reflects changes in parent-child relationships--parents are no longer as central to time use decisionmaking as they once were. This is not to diminish parents' roles in the development of adolescents, but rather to say that they do not seem to influence time *use decisions* as powerfully as they did in earlier childhood. Apparently, the range of activities parents and young adolescents do together is rather narrow. Further, since relationships between parents and young adolescents are often sensitive, it is not entirely surprising that this domain of time use is understudied by researchers.

Chores, Jobs, Responsibilities and Earned Income

This time use domain is particularly revealing, for it indicates several important characteristics of young adolescence--changing views of the capabilities of boys and girls; reinforcement of role stereotypes; and, perhaps most important, the desire among young people to earn money and, thereby, gain increased control of their time use options.

At home one finds historic, sex stereotyped roles in clear evidence. Timmer et. al. (1985) report girls do more household work then do boys. Benin (1990) using the same sample of 12-17 year olds, finds differences across household types. Daughters in households with two working parents spend 25% more time on chores then do daughters in "traditional" households (two parent, single earner). In "traditional" families girls spend about 7.5 hours more per week doing chores then do boys. Surprisingly, sons in households with two working parents spend considerably less time on chores then do sons

in "traditional" households (apparently in traditional households sons do more on the weekends resulting in a greater level of participation overall). Traditional families require about equal amounts of work effort from boys and girls, but the chores are clearly sex stereotyped.

Reporting results from the National Longitudinal Study, which sampled 160 children over the age of 12 (Timmer et.al., 1985), Timmer finds that "...mothers who work outside the home have less time available for housework, but children do not do more chores to compensate for the time deficiency. While they do contribute more if their mothers are employed than do children whose mothers are not employed, the level of contribution is still surprisingly low ." (Among 15-17 year olds whose mothers work, the contribution to the household economy averages 27.3 minutes a day; for those whose mothers do not work, contributions average 19.7 minutes per day)

Duckett, et.al. (1989) studied chore content. Like the Children's Time Study (Medrich et. al.,1982), Duckett reports boys doing more outdoor chores, girls more indoor chores (90% of girls' chores are indoors, 55% of boys' chores are indoors). Girls also seem to have more significant responsibilities in terms of the household economy. Girls are much more likely than boys to regularly shop for the family (Hauser, 1986, Stipp, 1988). Generally, however, young adolescents are responsible for keeping their rooms clean, this being the single chore most frequently required at home.

Young adolescents are beginning to find their way into the labor force. They want to earn money. In the National Education Longitudinal Study (1990), as noted earlier, fully 20% of eighth graders report working for pay (males do more manual work like yard cleanup, newspaper routes; females are most likely to babysit). Early work experience tends to be in private households.

In a study of 1001 ninth graders in the St. Paul area[3] , 82% of fourteen and fifteen year olds say they have had a job for pay outside the home at least one day per week on a regular basis (Mortimer, 1990). 57% held their first job at age twelve or younger. Adolescents from higher income families tended to work at an earlier age. Among employed ninth graders, boys earned more than girls.

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[3] Almost one-quarter of this sample were from single-parent families headed by females. 67% were White, 9% Black, 4% Hispanic, and 12% Asian.

Nilsen (1984) found that one in six fourteen and fifteen year olds was looking for work in 1983. She notes with interest that this age group is not included in official labor force statistics, so little is known about them. In her review of available data, young white adolescents were over twice as likely to work as blacks (18.4% as against 8.0%). During the school year whites were three times more likely to be employed then blacks. To the extent that information on kind of jobs was available, Nilson notes girls mostly babysit, while boys have more varied jobs. Greenberger and her colleagues (1983) studied slightly older adolescents, 3101 tenth and eleventh graders, and found a similar pattern. Looking at data from the High School and Beyond Survey of 58,000 high school sophomores and seniors, Lewin-Epstein (1981) reports that sophomore boys were slightly more likely to have jobs than girls (44.3% versus 40.0%) and work more hours each week (14.8 hours as against 10.5 hours). As noted above, girls earn less per hour. Corroborating patterns reported by others, Lewin-Epstein notes that first jobs tend to resemble the types of chores adolescents have had at home and that first time workers mostly work informally in other peoples homes. Boetler's Wisconsin study (1990) found that 54% of the males and 38% of the females worked for pay at least one hour per week. One quarter of the sample was employed ten or more hours per week and the proportion increased with age, from 11% of seventh graders to 46% of twelfth graders. Twenty percent of high school seniors worked twenty hours or more.

While data on the economic power of young adolescents is difficult to find, it is clear that their earnings are a presence in the marketplace. Stipp (1988) estimates that 6-15 year olds have incomes totalling close to $5 billion and growing. Further, not only are their personal expenditures of consequence, but they influence a great variety of small and big ticket family purchase decisions. Disposable income represents a source of freedom to the young adolescent. They buy things that are important to their activity patterns--cassettes and CDs, audio equipment, and other forms of entertainment.

Chores serve a variety of functions within the household, some actually important to the conduct of family life. For some, chores mark the starting point for entry into the world of work. Many young adolescents want to work, not necessarily for the "skill building" or "character building" experience, but for the money. It is important not to underestimate the importance of work even among young adolescents, for it has a real impact on the texture of time use and the options derived from earned income. Clearly, the young are increasingly job-seekers, and they appear willing to devote substantial portions of their out-

of-school time to work related activities. If this is so, traditional time use distinctions between older teenagers, who have long had access to the workplace, and younger teenagers, who seem to find their way into the job market—often doing things that might be viewed as "chores" at home—may be increasingly blurred in the future.

Television and Other Media

Perhaps no area of children's time use has received as much attention as the relationship between the young and the media, particularly television. Much of this research focuses on younger children, but this provides a benchmark against which changing patterns can be measured. Similarly, media use reflects the evolving interests of young adolescents as they move toward adulthood.

Television viewing peaks in early adolescence and begins to decline though the middle school years. Boys tend to watch more television then girls (Timmer reports that television viewing peaks among eleven-and twelve-year-old boys at 26 hours per week). As noted above, television was a primary family activity, perhaps one of only a few. Larson (1989a) found that among fifth and sixth graders almost two-thirds of time watching television is with family members. In contrast, only half of seventh and eighth graders watch with the family. Declining viewing time is mostly due to reduced television time with the family. Although there are significant differences in viewing patterns across adolescents from different types of families, on average they watch about 21 hours of television a week (U.S.NCES, 1990). Black eighth graders, on average, watch about 5 hours more per week than do children of other backgrounds. In contrast, across all racial and ethnic groups, the NELS sample reads for pleasure about 1.8 hours per week. Those having difficulty at school and those from single parent families tend to watch more television (Greenberg, 1988).

Other media are beginning to play a significant role in the lives of young adolescents. Listening to music becomes an intrinsically valued activity, representing, argues Larson et.al. (1989c), shifting interest from a medium reinforcing adult values to one reinforcing peer values. Young adolescents listen to music alone or sometime with friends, but almost never with members of the family (Larson, 1989b). Where television viewing is positively correlated with the amount of time spent with the family and negatively correlated with the amount of time spent with friends, the opposite is true of music.

Listening to music tends to mean listening to the radio. Many young adolescents spend four to six hours a day with the radio on, although they may do this while with friends, doing homework, or simultaneously engaged in some other activity. Black females tend to listen to music more than any other group of young adolescents.

The importance of music in the lives of young adolescents should not be underestimated. 93% say that music is important to them (Christenson and Roberts, 1990). As they move through adolescence it supplants television as the preferred form of media (Table 5). Over 90% of those in ninth grade report that they listen to radio daily. Tapes, radio, music and videos emerge as a significant backdrop to other activities, affecting time use and time use preferences.

The general pattern of media use taps the fundamentals of time use and fits nicely with other evidence indicating the increasing import of peer relations. What is especially interesting is the way in which music defines a cornerstone of adolescent peer culture, transforming time use.

Table 1
Mean Hours: Minutes Spent in Major Activities
Twelve to Seventeen Year Olds by Sex: Weekdays

Activity	Boys (N=77)	Girls (N=83)
Market Work	0:23	0:21
Household work	0:16	0:40
Personal Care	0:48	1:11
Eating	1:13	1:05
Sleeping	8:24	7:58
School	5:14	5:42
Studying	0:29	0:37
Church	0:03	0:07
Visiting	0:17	0:25
Sports	0:52	0:37
Outdoors	0:10	0:10
Hobbies	0:07	0:04
Art Activities	0:12	0:06
Playing	0:37	0:13
TV	2:23	1:48
Reading	0:10	0:13
Household Conversations	0:21	0:30
Other passive leisure	0:21	0:14
NA	0:14	0:17
Percent of time accounted for by above activities	93.1%	91.9%

Source: Timmer et. al., 1985. Table 14.3

Table 2
Mean Hours: Minutes Spent in Major Activities
Twelve to Seventeen Year Olds by Sex: Weekends

Activity	Boys (N=77)	Girls (N=83)
Market Work	0:58	0:25
Household work	0:46	1:29
Personal Care	0:35	1:16
Eating	0:58	1:15
Sleeping	9:10	10:12
School	-	-
Studying	0:25	0:25
Church	0:40	0:36
Visiting	0:46	0:53
Sports	1:05	0:26
Outdoors	0:36	0:19
Hobbies	0:04	0:07
Art Activities	0:11	0:09
Playing	0:35	0:24
TV	3:07	2:20
Reading	0:12	0:19
Household Conversations	0:24	0:30
Other passive leisure	0:43	0:33
NA	0:10	0:04
Percent of time accounted for by above activities	88.4%	89.0%

Source: Timmer et. al., 1985. Table 14.4

Table 3

Where Adolescents Spend Their Time

Home (41%)	
Bedroom	12.9%
Living Room	8.9%
Kitchen	8.1%
Yard or Garage	4.1%
Dining Room	3.3%
Basement	2.2%
Bathroom	1.6%
School (32%)	
Classroom	19.8%
Misc. Locations	2.3%
Cafeteria	2.2%
Halls	2.0%
Gym	1.9%
Student Center	1.3%
Library	1.2%
School Grounds	0.8%
Public (27%)	
Friends Home	5.4%
At Work	5.3%
Automobile	3.8%
Other Public Areas	3.0%
Store or Cafe	2.8%
Street	2.0%
Park	1.7%
Walking	1.5%
Indoor Rec Facility	0.8%
Church	0.8%
Bus or Train	0.4%

Source: Feldman (1990, 129). Adapted from M. Csikszentmihalyi and R. Larson, *Being Adolescent: Conflict and Growth in the Teenage Years*. NY: Basic Books, 1984.

Table 4
What Adolescents Spend Their Time Doing

Leisure Activities (40%)	
Socializing	16.0%
Watching TV	7.2%
Misc.	4.6%
Reading (Nonschool)	3.5%
Sports and Games	3.4%
Thinking	2.4%
Arts and Hobbies	1.5%
Listening to Music	1.4%
Maintenance (31%)	
Chores and Errands	14.3%
Eating	5.6%
Transportation	4.9%
Rest and Napping	3.2%
Personal Care	3.2%
Productive Activities (29%)	
Studying	12.7%
Classwork	12.0%
Jobs and other	4.3%

Source: Feldman (1990, 130). Adapted from M. Csikszentmihalyi and R. Larson, *Being Adolescent: Conflict and Growth in the Teenage Years*. NY: Basic Books, 1984.

Table 5
Adolescents Average Minutes of Media Use on a Typical School Day

Medium	7th Grade	9th Grade	11th Grade
Television Viewing	108	145	120
TV News Viewing	27	28	30
Reading for School	57	63	69
Reading for Pleasure	47	31	29
Radio Listening	85	111	103
Record/Tape Listening	64	82	89
Music Video Listening	41	32	23
All Music Listening	158	218	215

Source: Christenson and Roberts, 16.

Organized Activities

To the public and non-profit sector service provider, the circumstance of young Horatio, introduced at the beginning of this paper, defines a dilemma. Planning and providing out-of-school activities for young adolescents that meet community "standards" and that interest young people at the same time is a difficult task. Children may be the recipients of services, but they are offered in the name of society as a whole. Yet a century after their inception many of the institutions providing these programs and facilities remain in precarious, marginal positions, facing continuing crises of mandate and fiscal support.

"Pro-educational" agendas are integral to the way in which many out-of-school services are justified. The linkages to learning may seem ambiguous, but providers are often quick to describe the services as learning and socialization experiences, enriching or supplementing in-school programs. One salient difference, of course, is that these services are used voluntarily and those who participate do not "learn" in the same structured fashion as they do in school. Some feel that's the good news!

But this informality makes it difficult to measure the impact of these services despite the developmental linkages. The vagaries of mandate and purpose are reflected in the history of the services themselves. At times they have been in the vanguard of social change in the inner city. At other times they have been one of the most concrete symbols of child-centered suburban life. They have served as a safety valve for the social control of alienated adolescents, and they have also been the emissaries of " high culture" to the "deprived."

The Search for Legitimacy

Most out-of-school services struggle to be taken seriously. That this battle has not been won can be clearly seen in current confrontations over municipal budgets. In the public sector, frequently voiced sentiments are that these "quality of life" programs do not compare in importance with essential city functions like police and fire protection, and that the "non-essential" services, if they continue to exist at all, should charge fees or make greater use of volunteers rather than paid professionals; or that the non-profit sector should step in and assume much of the responsibility for delivering appropriate services to children outside school. In the broadest sense, when it comes to services outside school, children go in and out of fashion. As numbers go up and down, as "child centered" philosophies

gain or lose currency, as provider budgets are more or less tight, sympathy to the "non-essential" needs of children varies.

Children as Clients

Although children are clients, they are not necessarily the only, or the prime constituency. Children have little or no voice in the design or administration of most programs. The concept of "best interests of the child" is generally predicated on the assumption that adults should determine the scope of services. This is mostly self-evident or unavoidable, of course, and debate consequently revolves around which adults should make decisions (parents, psychologists, social workers, school officials, local politicians, etc.). So children are planned for, argued over, and manipulated much more often than they are consulted for their opinion about the design or the management of programs. Hence, the most effective statement the young can make is to "vote with their feet," either by participating or staying away. Within limits (there is not equal access across all populations) the essentially voluntary nature of the domain makes this possible.

The After School Services Tradition

The provision of after school services has a venerable, if sometimes controversial, history. The tradition dates at least to the late 1800s when philanthropists and settlement house leaders founded a variety of programs to ameliorate the consequences of poverty and substandard living conditions, particularly among the immigrant, urban poor (Meyer and Brightbill 1956, Gans 1957). Some of these programs were gradually taken over by municipal government agencies, and over time private sources of funding diminished in importance. Library services and recreation programs, for example, were clearly rooted in this earlier era and expanded through the first three decades of the twentieth century with increasing public sector support. By the Depression, a great variety of programs for young people, many involving adult supervision and leadership, were well established as an important part of the "services package" in cities large and small. In the 1930s innovative federal relief programs, including the Works Projects Administration, Public Works Administration and Civilian Conservation Corps, filled the fiscal breach and even expanded the level of local programming through job training and public works (Myers 1974; Corbin 1953). In many respects the range of services today is perhaps a bit more

elaborate--and somewhat more responsive to changing needs--but not unlike that which was in place by the Second World War. Today, nearly 3.5% of municipal government budgets are allocated for after-school programs, services, and parks and recreation facilities (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990). It is estimated that several billion dollars more is spent by private, philanthropic and quasi-public agencies in a comparable fashion (Duffy, 1989; The Foundation Center, 1989).

For many years there has been a persistent but inexact division of program styles between public and non-profit providers. Public agencies have emphasized programs of general interest, offering mostly introductory-level instruction and group activities, charging few, if any user fees. While the chief asset of public services has been greater accessibility, private services have been more diversified and responsive to changing needs and demands. Divisions have blurred in recent years as more private nonprofit agencies have received government and foundation grants for special programs or activities targeted at specific groups of young people; and as public sector departments (including libraries, museums, and so forth) have begun to address the needs of a special populations, often charging cost-of-service fees.

Whose Needs?

As noted earlier, after school children's services address many different needs--needs of child clients, needs of parents, and needs of those who provide them. It is important to understand these explicit and implicit agendas, for they are the backdrop against which one must view the "place" of the services in children's daily lives.

Those who provide after-school children's services articulate several objectives. The first of these is developmental. Children have a lot of "free time" that could be used to sharpen cognitive, creative, and physical skills. A second objective is socialization. Organized after-school activities can be used to teach cooperation, social roles, social values and self-discipline. In other words, these programs parallel efforts of family, school and religious institutions to inculcate particular sets of socially desirable norms and behaviors and to "build character."

Although the general objectives may be universal, the services can have very divergent impacts and intentions. For the poor, the ideological emphasis tends to be on "social

control." For the middle class and wealthy it is "opportunity enhancement." The former represents one of the most enduring objectives of out-of-school services--to curb delinquency and diminish the likelihood of socially destructive behavior by instilling middle class values and providing children with a healthy dose of mainstream culture. This places many after-school services squarely in the social work tradition. In contrast, opportunity enhancement assumes that children are growing up "properly" and that after school activities are designed for the purpose of enrichment. The goal is to provide a framework within which children can explore, improve and expand their skills and capabilities. In any program, both objectives are present. Those who provide after-school services, whether in the non-profit or the public sector, recognize that they serve many purposes and constituencies, from children seeking entertainment, to politicians hoping to minimize social problems, to parents looking for an alternative to television as a child minder.

There is a sense that organized services are of declining priority among public officials and policymakers; hence providers are always searching for ways to justify the import of their programs. Similarly, non-profit agencies view the shifting landscape as an "opening" --a significant opportunity to increase their role. The section that follows explores how well public and non-profit service providers are doing with their young adolescent clients, those who "vote with their feet."

This discussion of organized activities and use of community facilities begins by reviewing data from the Children's Time Study. Although this research is a decade old, and explored time use among the youngest adolescents, the quality of the sample, its inner city focus, and the special effort to understand how the world of organized activities works for the young, makes this an appropriate place to begin. After looking at the CTS data, other studies are reviewed.

Participation in After-School Organized Activities--Children's Time Study Data

There is tremendous diversity within the domain of organized activities, with regard to the substance, structure, and management styles of the available services. With a large sample of 11 and 12 year olds from Oakland, California, ethnically and socio-economically diverse the Children's Time Study (see Appendix A for an overview of the survey sample) identified a wide range of pursuits: over sixty different types of groups, lessons, and

activities (Table 6). But the domain, as the individual child saw it, was more limited: children did not actually choose from the entire array of programs. Participation, rather, was linked to the availability of activities (differences in access) and the child's interests (differences in preferences).

Three "types" of children were identified in the organized activities domain . For one type, participation involves very long, intense, continuous, prolonged commitments , almost like a "career" or second education. This is the lot of the gifted athlete or musical prodigy whose life is centered around developing his or her talents. Also in this group are a few less devoted, somewhat reluctant children pushed into a whirlwind of activities by over-anxious parents. These "heavy participants" were a small minority in the Time Study sample.

A second group of children participate in virtually no organized activities. These children are thereby "deprived" in one sense--for some it is by choice, for others, as described below, it is by force of circumstance. In the Children's Time Study, this characterized just under twenty percent of the sample.

The vast majority of children fall into a middle category: regular, but only occasional, participants in organized activities. In the Time Study Oakland survey, eighty percent participated in at least one activity during the school year, and the average was 2.6 activities per child over the course of the year.

Clearly, organized activities have a presence, but they do not dominate discretionary time use. Few activities appear to create problems of time. Most children were involved in activities that take up one or two afternoons a week after school. These were distinct episodes set off from the general after-school-day time pattern of watching television and playing informally, outdoor or indoors, with friends or alone. This level of participation seems reasonable. To do an activity every day would be the equivalent of a full time working mother going out to an evening meeting or class every night. A few people do that, and while it may have its rewards, it is far more than most want or need.

From the Time Study Survey, Table 7 shows levels of participation for summarized categories of organized groups, lessons, classes and clubs. While participation in over 60 categories of activities was recorded, 13 categories accounted for over 60% of the responses. It is interesting that the total amount of participation is roughly equal among

boys and girls and across income groups. At the same time, the table indicates that levels of participation in particular activities are strikingly different for boys and girls (e.g sports activities) and for children from different income groups (e.g. fine arts).

A variety of preconditions influence participation in organized activities. The Time Study attempted to measure parental attitudes and actions as they might affect levels of involvement. This assessment ranged from finding out whether parents generally approved of the "idea" of organized activities, to asking whether or not they had ever volunteered to help with a program. There was a strong consensus among mothers of all backgrounds as to the value of these programs (over 75% agreed that organized activities are an important part of a child's education), a fact which should not be lost on service providers who need to identify supportive constituencies in order to defend their programs. But the more substantial acts of facilitation--like seeking out a program for the child to join or volunteering--were more likely to be undertaken by the better educated and more well off. (See Table 8) This may not be surprising, but we should also consider that these kinds of facilitation are be concentrated among populations who have more information, more skill at "working the system," and more in common with service providers. In a circumstance where parents must often act as well as support the idea of organized programs to ensure that their children participate, a natural advantage accrues to those who serve as agents on their children's behalf.

The Time Study findings indicate widespread use of and support for organized activities. If both children and their parents are considered "clients," it is clear that there is a significant demand for a varied menu of programs, and that the available sets of activities represent important out-of-school options for young people.

Use of Community Facilities

For young adolescents, who are minimally mobile, *where* you can go may be as important as *what* you do once you get there. Access means several things--availability of an activity or facility is one dimension of the equation, ability to get to that activity or facility is the other. The two go hand and glove. As noted earlier, the history of public and non-profit sector services for the young is closely tied to the question of access.

The role of organized activities and community facilities in the lives of young adolescents is different than their role in the lives of younger children. They are still important, but as much for their value as a social setting as against an activity setting. Access and safety remain key issues. In this sense there are real opportunities for service providers. Making sure that young people have safe places to go, where they can do the things that are of interest to them with minimal adult intervention represent important options. This section reports findings from the Children's Time Study, focusing on the use of various public and non-profit sector facilities. While the Time Study sample is slightly younger than the group under consideration here, the results are representative of the role community facilities play a role in time use decisionmaking.

In the Time Study survey we asked questions about the use of particular community facilities, especially those located at the neighborhood level--facilities close to home. Communities tend to provide parks, libraries and recreation centers on a highly decentralized basis, easily accessible to the young and to families. In fact, access for children, the heaviest users, has always been a prime consideration in location decisions.

Table 9 summarizes levels of use for four types of facilities. Most children we surveyed were at least occasional users of each. As the table shows, patterns of use did vary from facility type to facility type, but in different ways. Schoolyards and parks were used by most children. This partly reflects proximity: these facilities tend to be most available and closest to home. Children from low income families were especially heavy users, reflecting differences in children's access to private play space at home, and more generally their access to off-street play areas. Boys, who tend to be more interested in sports activities that require open space, were much heavier users than girls. Further, as we found in other aspects of the Time Study, safety concerns among girls kept many away.

In contrast to schoolyards and parks, recreation centers were used by a smaller proportion of children, usually those who were participating in a organized activity, even though quite a number of centers were nearly as accessible as schoolyards. As in the case of parks and schoolyards, boys were heavier users of recreation centers. This seemed related to the kinds of activities available (overwhelmingly sports). Another factor that affected the use of recreation centers was the perceived adult presence. While children were essentially free at parks and schoolyards, recreation centers offered more structured, supervised activities.

Libraries, the Time Study survey showed, were not just places to go for books. Branch libraries were provided on a highly decentralized basis, located in neighborhoods throughout Oakland, and the Time Study sample used libraries like some other public facilities, as informal gathering places. Children of all backgrounds had similar patterns of library use, a finding that suggests that libraries play a more important role in low income neighborhoods than might be suspected. It also suggests that higher income children may not be among the heaviest users because many have alternatives (more reading matter and other media are readily available at home for instance; and many have a greater variety of safe places to meet informally). Unlike other facilities, libraries attracted boys and girls about equally, although gender related, ethnic differences were in evidence (see also Public Library Association, 1988).

Time Study findings for participation in organized activities and data on use of public facilities suggest that community services have developed some significant constituencies among youth populations. In the Time Study survey 80% of the children took part in community- sponsored organized activities on a regular basis; well over 60% used parks and schoolyards for unstructured activities; and 43% used neighborhood public libraries on their own. A substantial portion of those who used facilities for unstructured recreation said they were frequent users. Children of different sexes and different backgrounds participated in different ways, but all groups were significantly represented in all activities, structured or unstructured, indicating that these services and facilities allowed for the expression of a variety of tastes and many common interests. Time Study survey respondents, then, voted with their feet and voted very emphatically. Community resources are important to their out of school lives.

Table 6
Selected Organized Activities: Lessons and Groups
(Children's Time Study)

Activity	Number Participating in Lessons		Number Participating in Groups		% of all Children
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	(N=764)
Sports					
Swimming	18	11	3	2	4
Tennis	12	21	0	0	4
Skating	9	21	0	1	4
Baseball	25	14	93	32	21
Basketball	15	7	53	4	10
Football	8	0	56	1	9
Soccer	1	2	20	4	3
Kickball	0	0	1	18	3
Fine Arts					
Music	33	34	1	2	9
Dancing	5	71	0	4	10
Art	35	28	0	0	8
Crafts	16	30	0	0	6
Clubs and Organizations					
Social Clubs	-	-	5	22	4
Boys Club	-	-	73	0	10
Girl Scouts	-	-	0	64	8
Boy Scouts	-	-	62	0	8
Campfire Girls	-	-	0	8	1
YMCA	-	-	14	5	3
Religious Instruction or Church Activities	51	59	21	45	21
Other Activities	36	68	1	4	15

Source: Elliott A. Medrich et. al., 1982. *The Serious Business of Growing Up: A Study of Children's Lives Outside School* . Berkeley: University of California, 163-64.

Table 7
Participation in Organized Activities
(Children's Time Study)

	-------% Participating During School Year------					
		Family Income				
Activity Category	All Children	Low	Med	High	Boys	Girls
All Groups, Lessons and after-school programs	79.2	79.7	72.7	85.9	83.7	74.9
All Lessons	53.0	51.6	49.5	63.3	51.3	54.6
Sports Activities	58.1	61.9	52.3	57.0	71.3	46.8
Fine Arts Activities	28.4	25.8	24.1	45.3	21.3	35.1
Music Lessons	8.5	3.7	6.5	27.3	8.5	8.5
Church Related	20.7	19.7	20.4	21.3	19.3	22.1

Source: Children's Time Study

Table 8
Mothers' Approval and Facilitation of Organized Activities
(Children's Time Study)

Response	All Mothers (%)	Family Income: Low (%)	Med (%)	High (%)	p
Agree: organized after school activities are an important part of a child's education	75.4	78.1	76.2	66.3	ns
Registered child for at least one after-school activity during year	39.7	37.2	38.4	52.8	.001
Drove child regularly to at least one organized activity during year	21.5	10.3	27.3	44.0	.001
Actively sought organized program for child to join	47.3	41.1	54.2	57.5	.005
Volunteered in at least one organized activity for child in past year	33.9	26 9	37.2	49.5	.001

N=764

Source: Children's Time Study

Table 9
Use of Selected Services, Facilities, Programs
Children's Time Study

	Schoolyards (%)	Parks (%)	Recreation Centers/Programs (%)	Libraries (%)
Total Sample	63	69	31	43
Boys	71	74	37	46
Girls	55	64	25	41
Asian	47	54	14	61
Boys	52	53	21	65
Girls	45	55	6	57
Black	68	71	33	41
Boys	76	76	39	41
Girls	61	66	29	42
White	51	63	29	51
Boys	60	75	35	56
Girls	42	53	25	47
Lo Income	66	74	35	41
Med Income	66	65	28	48
Hi Income	38	60	22	41
Single Parent	63	71	36	40
Working	62	69	37	42
Not Working	64	73	34	38
Two Parent	64	67	25	46
Both Working	63	68	24	46
One Working	65	66	27	48

N=764

Source: Children's Time Study

Other Studies of Organized Activities

A number of recent studies describe the attachment of young adolescents to organized activities and community facility settings. Unlike the Children's Time Study, these data are somewhat more narrowly drawn, focused on what was done with little regard to the constraints and opportunities that serve as a backdrop to activity choices. Even so, some patterns emerge.

As noted earlier, the NELS survey of eighth graders (U.S. NCES, 1990) reported that 71% participate in organized activities--37% in team sports, 34% in religious youth groups, and 15% in hobby clubs. Boys are twice as likely as girls to be involved in non-profit sector activities like scouting, and in non-school team sports. Girls are more likely to participate in religious youth groups. Adolescents from homes of highest quartile socio-economic status participated at an 83% rate; those from the lowest quartile at a 60% rate (see Table 10).

Hedin's study (1986) of 1281 students in graders four through eight from three school districts in the Minneapolis area[4] found a somewhat different participation pattern among seventh and eighth graders, indicating that these kinds of data are often dependent on the nature and specificity of the questions asked. In Hedin's work 30% of the urban sample, and 54% of the suburban sample reported participation in an organized activities. Of particular interest here, Hedin explored factors influencing participation decisions. For the junior high students, decisions to participate often depended on whether their friends were involved, whether the activity interested them, and whether there was some autonomy in the program or activity. Parents, in contrast, were concerned primarily with content of the activity, cost, and convenience. Interests and activity patterns were very different in the urban and the suburban samples, further reinforcing the notion that service providers must be flexible and responsive to interests that may be quite different from one community to another, or even within the same community.

A study by the Lutheran Brotherhood (1990), with a large but poorly constructed sample of over 46,000 7-12 grade public school students (of many backgrounds) largely living in Midwestern communities with populations under 100,000, found still different

[4] Two of the three school districts were predominantly white and upper-middle income. Overall, 63% of the sample was white, 15% Black, and 14% American Indian. In addition to the children, 1212 parents were also surveyed, 44% low to middle income.

participation rates--43% and 41% for seventh and eighth grades respectively. Overall 39% for the sixth through twelfth grades were involved in community organizations or activities, with proportions participating declining from the junior high through the senior high school years. 57% were involved in church or synagogue, rates higher for junior high then senior high students; and 62% were involved in school extracurricular activities, participation rates following the reverse pattern, increasing from from junior to senior high.

Team sports, both organized and informal, are recognized as important activity choices among boys. Both are well supported by public and non-profit sector providers. Kirshnit (1989), however, among others, reports that levels of participation decline considerably through the junior high school years. 80% of boys lose interest in or drop out of sports between the ages of 12 and 17. Girls, who are apparently less likely than boys to participate in sports activities to begin with (and may not have as much of an opportunity as boys), have a high attrition rate early in junior high, leaving only a small core by ninth grade.

Littell's (1989) study of urban and suburban youth in the Chicago area offers a wealth of detail about participation in organized activities, the results difficult to generalize because of the small sample (87 sixth, seventh and eighth graders). The city sample was all black, the suburban sample was virtually all white. Nevertheless, Littell made a special effort to describe the variety of organized and informal activities and facility settings available in the two sample neighborhoods.

Littell found that the suburban sample participated in nearly eight organized activities per year, the urban sample six activities. The suburban sample was more predisposed to organized sports activities (3.1 activities per year versus 2.1 for the urban sample), while both samples were involved in about the same number of informal sports activities. In general boys in the city sample were more likely to participate in both organized and informal activities then were city girls; while suburban girls were more likely to be involved in organized and informal activities then were suburban boys. The poorest city children sampled and the wealthiest suburban children sampled reported more participation in organized activities then did others. Especially interesting, among both samples, children whose caretakers worked part time were the heaviest participants in organized activities. involved at a higher level then those whose caretakers worked full time or not at all (suggesting that there may be some relationship between the care function and activity participation).

With regard to sponsorship, public sector services were used more then private sector services, even though the private sector offered the same level of activities in the suburbs and even a greater level of activities in the city. Respondents reported, by nearly a three to one ratio, in both the suburban and city neighborhoods, that the organized activities they chose were provided by a public sector rather than a private non-profit organization. Without regard to the level of service available from providers in each sector, these differences are dramatic and important . Suburban students were more involved in school sponsored activities (there were fewer available in the city), and suburban students were twice as likely to be involved in church based activities. Suburban churches also had a much larger array of activities available to choose from.

City students mostly participated in low-or no-cost activities. Their suburban counterparts were more likely to have available, and be involved in, more expensive and esoteric activities like golf, minibiking, racquetball.

The element of choice among students this age is clear--85% of the city sample and 86% of the suburban sample report that they themselves choose which organized activities they participate in.

In terms of the affective correlates of participation, Holland (1987) found clear value. Among a sample of high school students, those involved in organized activities had higher self-esteem, higher grades, higher educational aspirations, lower delinquency rates, and a greater sense of control over their lives.

Organized activities, then, remains a significant presence in the lives of young adolescents. While their interests are changing, the literature documents the import of the domain, and indicates that there is considerable room for service providers. The young adolescent "market" is different. They are still minimally mobile, so they need services close to home. But providers must be sensitive to the growing independence of the age group and to differences in needs across and within communities, across gender and across age groups (even a one year age difference may make a considerable difference in terms of interests). Even so, organized activities and community facilities provide time use alternatives for a surprising proportion of this age group in transition.

Table 10
Percent of Eighth Graders Participating (This Year) in Out of School *Activities*

Background Characteristic	Any Activity	Scouting	Boys/ Girls Clubs	Y or Youth Group	4-H	Religious Youth Group
Sex						
Male	70.7	18.9	11.2	14.3	8.5	29.5
Female	71.8	9.8	10.2	16.2	10.0	37.9
Race/ Ethnicity						
Asian*	67.9	13.1	9.1	12.7	4.7	27.4
Hispanic	60.3	10.9	13.2	13.9	6.1	24.6
Black	65.6	20.0	23.7	23.0	13.8	30.0
White	74.4	13.7	8.1	14.3	9.1	36.6
Amer. Indian**	60.9	17.3	18.0	15.7	10.0	27.5
SES						
Lowest Q	60.0	12.9	14.5	14.0	11.1	22.7
Second Q	58.5	13.6	11.1	15.5	10.0	30.1
Third Q	74.2	14.4	9.5	14.8	9.4	35.9
Highest Q	82.6	16.0	8.0	16.7	6.7	45.6
Location						
Urban	69.1	15.2	14.6	17.9	5.9	29.6
Suburban	71.5	14.0	9.1	14.2	7.1	33.3
Rural	72.8	13.9	9.9	14.8	14.9	37.9

*And Pacific Islanders
**And Native Alaskan

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1990. *A Profile of the American Eighth Grader*. Table 3.4.

III. The Link Between Time Use and the Provision of Public and Non-Profit Sector Services

Time use research represents a significant opportunity to explore the relationship between activity patterns among the young and service and program needs. As noted above, services designed around adolescent discretionary time are intended to achieve several objectives. While the content of programs may vary from community to community, or even from neighborhood to neighborhood to neighborhood within a community, adolescent time use patterns suggest some important issues that service providers must confront if they wish to augment program participation levels among youthful constituencies.

1. Young adolescents do not spend large amounts of time engaged in activities sponsored by public or non-profit sector agencies, but the things they do are valued.

Young adolescents spend much of their time outside school engaged in unstructured activities. Organized programs of the type *traditionally* provided by the public and non-profit sector tend to attract only highly motivated adolescent constituencies. As city budgets become more constrained, the non-profit sector has a real opportunity to bridge the services' gap with initiatives geared to the interests and styles of young adolescents. Services must be tailored, designed to suit specific communities and specific groups of young people.

2. The public and non-profit sector tend to concentrate their efforts on providing for those inclined to participate. The needs or interests of non-users are rarely considered.

Providers tend to worry least about non-users. Programs are planned with active clients in mind. Such is the nature of the provider perspective. The real opportunity lies in finding ways to attract non-users.

3. Service providers are not always anxious or willing to plan programs around the expressed preferences or interests of young adolescents.

Providers offer services that reflect adult views of what should be available to young people, or how programs should be organized. This logic is pervasive and represents an antiquated approach to services programming. Successful programs for young adolescents must be designed around careful assessments of needs and preferences . Young adolescents have enough freedom to choose for themselves, and are clear enough about their time use preferences to play an important role in the program planning process.

4. Young adolescents of different backgrounds share some interests in common, but they also differ in many ways. If public and non-profit sector service providers wish to increase participation in their programs, they must design services targeted at specific populations and improve their marketing skills.

Like adults, the leisure time patterns of the young vary in routinized fashion, somewhat linked to family background, ethnicity, sex, socio-economic status and the like. But public and non-profit sector programs cannot compete with flashier, private sector alternatives if the opportunities provided are based entirely on a menu rooted in stereotypical views of what young adolescents "ought to" like. This only leads to a marginal "menu" of minimally interesting activities that compete poorly with other time use possibilities. Like the private sector, which pays a great deal of attention to adolescent time use patterns and interests, public and non-profit sector providers need to develop their marketing capabilities, if expanding the participation base is a valued objective.

5. There must be a careful balance between providing structured programs and providing safe, neighborhood based facilities where young adolescents can be together on their own terms.

Certain characteristics of time use among young adolescents support this proposition.

A. As compared with younger children, adolescents are more selective about the programs in which they participate. They exercise a substantial degree of freedom and choice.

B. As compared with younger children, young adolescents are increasingly social and spend more of their discretionary time with their peers.

C. As compared with younger children, interests and activity preferences of young adolescents are very diverse across communities (they are less easy to reach with "generic" packages).

D. There is evidence that some youth do not have enough safe places to congregate, without regard to the kinds of programs (formal or informal, structured or unstructured) that may be offered.

It is going to become increasingly difficult for the public sector to address the out-of-school needs of young adolescents as "soft" services fall victim to municipal fiscal austerity. Both programs and facilities are compromised.

- *Services traditionally provided at the neighborhood level are closing*. There are fewer libraries, recreation centers, formal and informal recreation programs, and the like.Those who are less mobile--especially poor children--are less likely to be able to get to centralized facilities or enroll in programs. Since young people are predisposed toward services that are easily available and conveniently located, all but the most highly motivated will invariably be discouraged.

-*Providers are introducing or increasing user fees*. If the cost can not be covered, the program is cancelled. This, of course, raises questions of equity. Data from the Children's Time Study shows clearly that poor children, who are most likely to be using free services if they are taking advantage of community services at all, are much less likely to be involved when fees are required.

-*Services are reducing specialized professional staff*. To economize, specialists are eliminated, thereby decreasing the skill building opportunities associated with many out-of-school programs. The programs continue, but the substance of the activities changes. In these instances, only those who can afford a private alternative may be able to pursue enrichment agendas.

These circumstances are changing the organization of the public sector in ways that will certainly affect who is involved in out-of-school activities and what they are involved in. Fiscal considerations, not equity concerns, are beginning to determine the direction of many programs. Evidence suggests that, as compared with circumstances at the time of the

Children's Time Study (late 1970s), there are fewer facilities and organized activities available today. As a consequence of decisions made in the name of fiscal austerity, the public sector is paying less attention to the out-of-school needs of young adolescents. In the end, politically disfranchised young people simply make due with what is available. But cuts in services cannot fail to affect both time use and the development and socialization of young adolescents in ways that go far beyond those anticipated by decisionmakers. Herein lies the challenge for non-profit sector providers--for this also represents a considerable opportunity.

IV. Some Suggested Priorities for Future Research

Across the diverse literature focused on time use patterns among young adolescents, a number of research priorities emerge.

1. There are some significant gaps in the literature. Most time use studies are of white, middle class adolescents. Few researchers sample minority adolescents of any ethnicity--not African-American, Hispanic, or Asian. This is particularly troublesome, as available data suggest some very different patterns of time use across ethnic groups. Further, given that some groups of adolescents are viewed as "high risk" by one set of measures or another, much more ought to be known about their time use, as a descriptive basis for developing policy and program options. On this same note, there are virtually no studies of rural adolescents, who are growing up at a time of rapid change in small town America; or handicapped children, whose needs are especially amenable to documentation with time use methodologies. Ultimately, given the diversity of family structure, family circumstance, and community life, it will be essential to design comprehensive, large scale studies in order to to identify systematic variations in time use across demographic groups.

2. Some time use domains have been described in detail. In other cases little is known. As evidenced by this review, some time use domains have received considerable attention, others very little. For instance a great deal is known about where the media "fit" in the lives of young adolescents. In contrast, rather little is written about parent-child time use together. One might suppose that this is because, on the one hand television and other media are central to the lives of young people, while on the other hand parents and young adolescents do not spend very much time together. One might also argue that parent-child time together is not a "comfortable" domain of interaction, hence it is studied less often. But it is essential to remember that the problem is not just to define how much time is involved in activities in each domain. What the use of time means, and what factors shape the pattern, represent equally important contributions of the research.

Spotty coverage of the time use domains necessitates attention. A variety of studies could be proposed, each built around similar sets of questions. There is a real need for adequate data, drawn over time (not necessarily longitudinal), from which it would become possible to chart

the changing nature of adolescent time use, for this offers one window on adolescent well being and how children of different backgrounds are faring.

3. Not enough is known about the complexity of time use decisions among young adolescents. It has been noted that time outside school is not "free"--it is the product of a set of opportunities and constraints. Time use is the culmination of a process that is more or less constrained, based on greater or fewer opportunities for one child as against another. In some respects the underpinnings of the decisionmaking process are as important as the time use outcomes themselves. Consider two examples.

a. The Children's Time Study found that about equal proportions of higher and lower income children participate in organized activities. But lower income children were only half as likely to take private lessons or be involved in privately sponsored groups as their higher income counterparts. The structure of participation matters as much as the activity itself, because it says a great deal about constraints on the options of lower income children.

b. Almost everyone would like to see children watch less television. What does one do, however, if the neighborhood is perceived as unsafe, and parents require the child to come directly home from school and stay inside once home. What does it mean if, in this circumstance, the child watches more television then another child who lives in neighborhood perceived as very safe. Knowing how much television each child watches tells only a small part of the story. The context affects the time use pattern.

Constraints and opportunities differ across populations of young adolescents. Understanding how they affect decisionmaking is as important as describing the pattern itself.

These considerations suggest some particular research priorities.

1. We need to know more about populations studied infrequently. To the extent that time use patterns tell us something about how children are growing up, studies of children of different backgrounds, measured along the same sets of variables, would help pinpoint differences in the form and substance of daily life. There are very few studies of poor children, of children of color, of children from specific backgrounds (like single parent families), of children with handicaps. These are the kinds of studies we must encourage. Small scale,

tightly drawn case studies and ethnographies can help fill the void. The real need is to begin serious, systematic inquiries across these populations.

2. Researchers need to focus on linkages between time use and policy. Applications of time use data to issues of policy are few. The Children's Time Study, for instance, specifically looked at the ways in which a diminishing base of support for publicly sponsored, organized activities was affecting early adolescents of different backgrounds. As another example, some studies of television time use have looked particularly at the relationship between exposure and school performance. A third example is research sponsored by county governments in Wisconsin examining teenage time use, for the purpose of identifying which types of community based social services would be responsive to the needs of adolescents. Such linkages provide an important backdrop to policy definition and program design.

3.Data on who participates in non-profit sector services is difficult to find and hard to analyze. There are virtually no studies comparing the characteristics of young adolescents involved in non-profit sector programs with those who are not--critical to developing strategies that might increase participation levels. Comprehensive and systematic studies of the relationship between adolescent discretionary time use and participation in non-profit sector services can sharpen planning capabilities and improve prospects for designing programs that will appeal to those less interested in currently available offerings.

4. To the extent that adolescents' needs and preferences can be identified by studying discretionary time use, it is important to find ways of improving the flow of information between researchers and providers. Equally important, public and non-profit sector providers themselves generate and use data about young adolescents, with varying degrees of sophistication. Especially in times of fiscal austerity, provider-based research should be encouraged, as it offers a significant opportunity to develop stronger linkages between what we know about the time use activity patterns of young adolescents, and service needs.

Descriptions of time use can contribute to the ways in which we think about services for young adolescents. It is essential, however, to fill some gaps in the literature, address some methodological issues, and find ways to effectively bring data to bear on the work of those planning and designing programs.

Appendix A
Children's Time Study
Setting, Sample, Design

In the Spring, 1976, 764 early adolescents (11-13 years old) from Oakland, California (population 333,000) and their parents were interviewed as part of a study of children's use of time outside of school.

The sample was drawn in the following manner. Public elementary school attendance areas were defined as primary sampling units. Children in Oakland who attend public school, attend the school closest to their home, hence school attendance areas are geographic representations of the city's demography to a significant degree. Of the 58 school attendance areas, 20 were selected for study by stratified probability sampling techniques to reflect all public school attendance areas in the city. Then the names of approximately forty students were drawn randomly from the sixth grade rolls at each sample school, yielding a cluster sample of twenty attendance areas, 764 cases (number of cases per area proportional to population). Characteristics of the sample were:

Ethnicity:

African American	59.8%
Caucasian	24.2
Asian	9.2
Hispanic	4.6
Other	2.2

Income:

Low	38.3%
Middle	30.4
High	24.2
Not Available	7.1

Mothers Education:

Some High School or Less	22.8%
High School Graduate	27.9
Some College	31.4
College Graduate and Above	16.1
Not Available	1.8

Interviews were conducted at the home of each child between April and June 1976.100% of schools cooperated as did 87.2% of families. There were two protocols: a child's interview schedule and a parents questionnaire (which was filled out by the parent while the child was being interviewed).

Interviews consisted of both closed and open ended questions about out of school life. Parents questionnaires focused on family background, parents socialization priorities, and childrearing practices.

For details see Elliott A. Medrich et. al., 1982. *The Serious Business of Growing Up: A Study of Children's Lives Outside School* . Berkeley: University of California.

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